

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claim(s) 17-33, 57-62, and 88-91. Please amend Claims 34, 40, 41, 52, 53, 55, 63, 64, 70 and 85. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

Claims 1-33 (Canceled)

34. (Currently amended) A method for providing directory assistance information in a public telecommunication network accessed by a toll-free number, the network comprising a customer station and a call processing station, the method comprising:

at the customer station,

dialing a telephone number used for accessing the call processing station;

setting up a call connection from the customer station to the call processing station;

providing a request for information relating to a telephone number for a specific provider of goods or services;

at the call processing station,

receiving the request for information from the customer station;

examining the request for information to identify a subject matter area associated with the specific provider of goods or services;

automatically selecting an advertisement categorized within the subject matter area;

receiving the selected advertisement from a stored media;

forwarding the selected advertisement to the customer station; and

at the customer station,

receiving the selected advertisement.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:
 querying a database to determine the selected advertisement, the querying using
as at least one query parameter from the examining the request for information.
36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is a geographic location component of the specific provider of goods or services in the request for information.
37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is a name of a business that is the specific provider of goods or services.
38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is a general type of business associated with the specific provider of goods or services specified in the request for information.
39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is a description of a product or service.
40. (Currently amended) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is a code associated with the specific provider of goods or services related to the request for information.
41. (Currently amended) The method of claim 40, wherein the code is a Standard Industry Classification (SIC) code of the specific provider of the goods or services related to the request for information.
42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:
 causing the advertisement to be played to the customer station in an audible form.
43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:
 causing the advertisement to be played to the customer station in a visual form.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the automatically selecting an advertisement further comprises :

automatically selecting the advertisement based on an additional criteria including at least one of geographic location for the customer station or a telephone number for the customer station.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

providing access to a service associated with the selected advertisement.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising:

connecting the customer station to a telephone number associated with the selected advertisement.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 46 wherein the connecting is performed only after optionally prompting the user of the customer station.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

querying a database to determine the selected advertisement, the querying using the associated subject matter area identified from the request as at least one database query parameter.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 48, wherein the database query furthermore returns an optional intercept parameter associated with the selected advertisement, wherein the optional intercept parameter is used to determine whether the user of the customer station is to be prompted to request access to a service associated with the advertisement.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

querying a database to determine the selected advertisement, the querying using the associated subject matter area determined from the request and a location associated with the customer station as database query parameters.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

connecting the customer station to a telephone number for the specific provider associated with the request for information.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~51~~ 47, wherein the connecting to a telephone number associated with the selected advertisement is provided at reduced cost as compared to a standard cost for a request for directory information associated with a telecommunication service provider.

53. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~51~~ 47, wherein the connecting to a telephone number associated with the selected advertisement is provided without cost to the user of the customer station.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the query parameter is the telephone number associated with the specific provider associated with the request for information.

55. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 54, wherein the query parameter is a SIC code associated with the telephone number associated with the specific provider.

56. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 34 wherein the request for information relating to a telephone number for a specific provider of goods or services does not inherently determine the subject matter area.

57-62. (Cancelled)

63. (Currently Amended) A system for providing access to directory assistance information for a public network via a toll-free number, the system comprising:

- a customer station including call connection circuitry; and
- a call processing station that operates to
 - receive a request for directory assistance information from the customer station,
 - ~~to~~ examine the request for directory assistance information to identify a subject matter area associated with a specific provider of goods or services,
 - ~~to~~ automatically select an advertisement categorized within the subject matter area
- and
- ~~to~~ selectively forward the selected advertisement to the customer station.

64. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 63, the customer station further comprising:

- a user input device to obtain a telephone number used for accessing the call processing station;
- a transmitter that operates to transmit the request for directory assistance information received from the user, wherein the call connection circuitry operates to set up a call connection from the customer station to the call processing station via the toll-free number; and
- a first a receiver that operates to receive the selected advertisement.

65. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, the call processing station further comprising:

- a second receiver that operates to receive the request for directory assistance information from the customer station; and
- a processor that operates to retrieve the selected advertisement from a stored media.

66. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, further comprising:

a database apparatus that operates to process a query to determine the selected advertisement, the query having at least one query parameter derived from the request for directory assistance information.

67. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the query parameter is a geographic location component of the specific provider of goods or services in the request for information.

68. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 66, wherein the query parameter is a name of a business that is the specific provider of the goods or the services.

69. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 66, wherein the query parameter is a description of a good or service.

70. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 66, wherein the query parameter is a code associated with the request for directory assistance information related to a provider of one of goods and services.

71. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 70, wherein the code is a Standard Industry Classification (SIC) code.

72. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, further comprising:

an audio output device that operates to cause the advertisement to be played to the customer station in an audible form.

73. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, further comprising:

a visual output device that operates to cause the advertisement to be displayed at the customer station.

74. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the processor further automatically selects the advertisement based on a telephone number requested by the user.

75. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the call processing station further provides access to a service associated with the selected advertisement.

76. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 75, wherein the customer station is selectively connected to a telephone number associated with the selected advertisement.

77. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 76 wherein the customer station is connected to the service provider associated with the selected advertisement only after prompting the user.

78. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the database further determines the selected advertisement by using the associated subject matter area identified from the request for directory assistance information as at least one database query parameter.

79. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 78, wherein the database query returns an optional intercept parameter associated with the selected advertisement, and the optional intercept parameter is used to determine whether the user of the customer station is to be prompted to request access to a service associated with the selected advertisement.

80. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the database further determines the selected advertisement by using the associated subject matter area determined from the request for directory assistance information and a location associated with the customer station as database query parameters.

81. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the customer station is selectively connected to a telephone number for the specific provider associated with the request for information.

82. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 81, wherein the connection is provided at reduced cost as compared to a standard cost for a request for directory assistance information associated with a telecommunication service provider.

83. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 81, wherein the connection is provided without cost to the user of the customer station.

84. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 66, wherein the query parameter is the telephone number associated with the specific provider associated with the request for directory assistance information.

85. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 84, wherein the query parameter is a SIC code associated with the telephone number associated with the specific provider.

86. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 63, wherein the request for directory assistance information relating to a telephone number for the specific provider of the goods or the services does not inherently determine the subject matter area.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising:

providing said user with the selected number if said user does not agree to be connected to the advertised provider.

Claims 88-91 (Canceled)